

## Testimony By Mrs. Vicki Perea

Former Member

Albuquerque City  
Council

### BIOGRAPHY

Born in the town of Los Lunas, my roots run deep in New Mexico

. I have grown up and faced life's tough challenges, advanced myself professionally, and most importantly, raised a beautiful family here in the Land of Enchantment .

It was soon after high school that I met and married the man of my life, Seff Perea, who I have been married to for 43 years now. We are the parents of two sons and their wonderful wives, as well as grandparents to two very special granddaughters.

My professional career began in city government, where I was tasked with managing over \$750 million of taxpayer money as Director of the City of Albuquerque's Capital Improvement Program. Managing a division of government accountable to the people is something I know well, having spent numerous years doing just that.

My service in city government moved to a new level when I retired to run for the City Council from the northeast heights of Albuquerque; as a policy maker and eventually as the first Hispanic female to be elected City Council President, I learned to represent the public directly, using all that I had learned throughout life to make the very tough decisions that elected officials make each day.

Since that point I have been privileged to work on various community service

committees/organizations including:

- Trinity International  
University Board of Regents from 2004 to the present
- Family Life Communications  
(Family Life Radio) Board of Directors from 2001 to the present
- Chair of the City of  
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County  
Government  
Unification Exploratory Committee in 2002, and Vice Chair of the  
Unification Charter Commission for the City of Albuquerque/Bernalillo  
County in 2003.
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- New Mexico Municipal League
- National League of Cities

I have attended the University of New Mexico and completed the Program for Executives in State and Local Government at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University . I have also been awarded an honorary LLD, Doctor of Laws, from Cohen University and Theological Seminary.

TESTIMONY

It is an honor for me to come before you today to talk about such a relevant and important issue to the state of New Mexico.

My name is Vickie Perea, I am a lifelong New Mexican, a wife of 43 years, a mother of two, and a grandmother of two. I have served as a City Councilor and eventually City Council president in Albuquerque, and I am now running for the position of New Mexico Secretary of State.

Over the last two years, I have had the opportunity to study the history of elections management in New Mexico, and to a large extent, it is the pervasive fraud that one can see in the process that has called me to be a candidate this year.

I appreciate your willingness to come to New Mexico to discuss these issues, and at this time, I'll walk you all through a brief powerpoint presentation that details only a very small part of the fraud that has existed in New Mexico's election system, and how true voter identification could help to stop future fraud.

First of all, as you very well know, with elections coming every two years (and sometimes quicker than that), voter fraud is difficult to track down and prosecute. But we have seen fraud take place - and we have had prosecutions of voter fraud - in a number of cases.

I will begin with the most blatant examples of votes being stolen from New Mexico voters in 2004. Rosemary McGee is a Bernalillo County voter who tried to vote on Election Day in 2004, only to find that someone else had signed the voting roster in her place earlier in the day (and spelled her name wrong). She voted on a provisional ballot and later learned that her legal vote was not counted. You can see the voting roster on this slide, with Rosemary's actual signature on the bottom, and the signature of the person who voted in her place at the top. And on the next slide, you can see the "NO" box checked and circled, indicating that her legal vote was not counted.

But Rosemary is not the only one...this also happened to Dwight Adkins, Kim Wistrand, Stephanie Ortiz, Heather Philpot, and Frank Sanchez. Six voters - who we know about - whose votes were taken from them in 2004. You will hear later on that I believe that a true voter identification measure is the foundation of a secure election system. All of these people would have been able to cast a ballot and have it count if voters had been required to show a photo ID before voting. (Source: Albuquerque Journal, November 3rd and 9th, 2004)

But let me now briefly walk you through a past history of voter fraud problems, beginning with a very early example, in 1992, with Elodia Candelaria, a community activist in Albuquerque who was convicted of embezzlement and voter fraud. (Source: Albuquerque Journal, July 27th, 1992)

In 1997, Rio Arriba County's Deputy Clerk, Henrietta Sandoval-Smith, was convicted of voter fraud, saying at the trial, "I've always been guilty." She was part of an extensive voter fraud ring, in which 19 people were indicted on voter fraud charges, including city councilors, a school board chairman, a party chairman, a state police captain, a city manager and others. Their charges included false swearing, false voting, falsifying voter registration forms, unlawfully opening ballot boxes, and so on... (Source: Albuquerque Journal, December 13th, 1997,

Journal North, July 1st, 1997)

Rio Arriba County Clerk David Chavez, and his Deputy Clerk Vicky Martinez were two of those who were found guilty and sentenced to jail time, with testimony indicating that they had illegally opened ballot boxes in the 1996 primary and 1997 special election, one time with bolt cutters from the local jail. (Santa Fe New Mexican, "Rio Arriba County Clerk Guilty of Vote Fraud," March 14, 1998)

This is not the only county clerk to be convicted of fraud, however. In 2003, Dona Ana County's Clerk, Ruben Ceballos, was convicted of five counts of violating the New Mexico election code. (Albuquerque Journal, "In NM, It's Man vs. Voting Machine," April 10th, 2004)

In 2000, a district judge claimed the New Mexico election had been compromised as a ballot box containing 252 ballots went missing in Bernalillo County; a locked ballot box was later found in the back room of the warehouse, containing "about 250 ballots." (Albuquerque Journal, Compilations by Fritz Thompson Illustrations and Russ Ball of the Journal, January 1st, 2001)

In 2004, during the canvassing of the thousands of provisional ballots in Bernalillo County, the county clerk noted that her workers had seen approximately two dozen instances of double voting, meaning that at least 24 voters had attempted to vote two times in the election. (Source: Albuquerque Journal, November 13th, 2004)

And also, in 2004, we saw significant problems with 527 voter registration organizations. In addition to dropping off droves of fraudulent registration forms to county clerks in New Mexico - many of which were caught before being processed - there were a number of instances where forms were processed and ineligible voters were registered or registered voters were re-registered without their knowledge (and often times, under incorrect social security numbers). (Albuquerque Tribune, "Flawed Voter Sign-ups Piling Up," August 7th, 2004)

For example, a police officer named Glen Stout received a voter registration card for his 13 year old son, and another for his 15 year old neighbor, both of whom had been registered to vote by an ACORN employee. Stout worried that these cards could have been sent to another address, and someone less honest than he could have used them to vote on Election Day under his son's name. (Albuquerque Journal, "Clerk Seeks Vote-Fraud Review," October 29th, 2004 Albuquerque Tribune, "Sign-up Group Makes Stand," September 10th, 2004 Albuquerque Journal, "ID New Voters, Lawsuit Urges," August 21st, 2004)

A Tucson, Arizona man received a voter card in the mail; an ACORN employee was found to have registered the man in Albuquerque without his knowledge. And we know that fraudulent registrations have also been submitted by ACORN in Denver, and employees have been fired for fraud in Ohio. In another incident, police raided an Albuquerque home on a drug search, only to find fraudulent voter registration forms at the home, along with a "crack pipe." The individual was being paid \$5 for each registration form he turned in. There were also reports of deceased individuals being registered to vote. (Albuquerque Journal, "Clerk Seeks Vote-Fraud Review," October 29th, 2004 Albuquerque Tribune, "Sign-up Group Makes Stand," September 10th, 2004 Albuquerque Journal, "ID New Voters, Lawsuit Urges," August 21st, 2004 Albuquerque Tribune, "Flawed Voter Sign-ups Piling Up," August 7th, 2004 Albuquerque Journal, October 19th, 2004)

Ladies and gentlemen, I am running out of my time with you today, but know that true election reform has been called for by good people on both sides of the political aisle, and by the editorial boards of newspapers and other publications throughout New Mexico.

And, in the municipal elections of 2005, Albuquerque voters overwhelmingly supported a photo voter identification proposition, with approximately 73% approval.

I believe strongly that a system in which voters are required to show photo ID to vote will prevent much of the voter fraud that we see in our election system today. It is a measure that can be fairly applied, so as not to disenfranchise a single voter, and it would go a long way to increasing ballot security in New Mexico. And, in a system with such a photo ID provision, falsely registering voters would be a pointless endeavor because voting under their names would be all but impossible.

I would like to thank you again for the time you are spending in our beautiful state. I love New Mexico and all that it has to offer; I just know that our children deserve a clean, fair, and honest democratic process. Thank you.